Adjusting to a new culture and foreign country can be really difficult. No matter how “prepared” you are, feeling overwhelmed, lost or homesick is completely normal. In the moment, it’s easy to forget why you signed up to study abroad in the first place. If you’re having a difficult time adjusting, here are a few reminders just some of the benefits you’ll experience during your time here:

**Gains in Personal Development & Growth:**
- Increases self-confidence & self-reliance
- Gain independence & maturity
- Lasting impact on world view
- Grow your global network of friends
- Prepares you to face challenges in the future
- Better understanding of your personal strengths & weaknesses

**Academic Commitment:**
- Enhances interest in specific academic study
- Influences subsequent educational experiences
- Reinforces commitment to foreign language study

**Intercultural Development:**
- Language and cultural immersion
- Helps you to better understand your own cultural views and biases
- Influences you to seek out a greater diversity of friends
- Continues to influence your interactions with people from different cultures
- Gain better appreciation of other cultures as well as your own

This isn’t going to be an easy journey, but during the challenging times we hope you won’t lose sight of the numerous benefits you’re gaining from this experience. Often times, being in a challenging or uncomfortable situation leads to the most personal development and growth. Hang in there, and reach out to your host family and Ayusa Community Representative if you’re having a tough time. We are here to help and support you!

The “benefits” are taken and adapted from the following websites:
- [http://www.diversityabroad.com/study-abroad-personal-benefits](http://www.diversityabroad.com/study-abroad-personal-benefits)
- [http://www.collegeanswer.com/selecting/content/sel_abd_ben.jsp](http://www.collegeanswer.com/selecting/content/sel_abd_ben.jsp)